



Stirling Stuff

Volume 60, No. 2

February 2016

Pastor's Letter



As I sit in my office this morning, the Monday after the big snow storm, I am mindful of how nature can so easily take us back to earlier times. I must admit that on Saturday, as I sat at home watching the blizzard of 2016 inundate us, it was a weird feeling to feel helpless. I blew out my driveway in the morning, but in several hours you could not tell I had done it. I had to keep blowing out a section so our dog, Jacques, had a place to go when we took him out.

We live in a world now filled with violent storms and weather patterns. Whether you blame it on climate change or something else, our weather is changing, and not just in our nation, but worldwide. I just saw that the other day Taiwan experienced the cold of a polar vortex which was the coldest in over 50 years. This is not about weather, but the fact that there are times when all of our technology and devices will not help us. When superstorm Sandy blows down the power lines, when flood waters inundate our homes, when snow and wind paralyze the largest city in our nation, we quickly realize that we are not as in control as we thought we were.

It is during those times we have to rely on others to help us. It is when neighbors help neighbors. I find it interesting that it is while I'm out shoveling snow that I converse with some of my neighbors more than at any other time, when a neighbor comes and asks, "Can I do something for you?" After superstorm Sandy knocked out our power for 5 days, how wonderful it was when my next door neighbor, whose power was restored in 2 days, let me plug in an extension cord so we could run hairdryers and charge up cell phones and computers. How wonderful it was when a friend invited us over the day after and gave us a wonderful lunch and let us power up phones and computers.

As technologically savvy as we are as a nation, there are still those times when our neighbors help us more than any computer or cell phone ever could. I keep thinking about the second of the two great commandments, "love your neighbor as you love yourself." How true, because you never know when you may need to depend on your neighbors, and this isn't just about those neighbors next door, but our neighbors on the other side of the world. I'm thinking of Syrian refugees who are being taken in by other countries – did they ever imagine that they would need the help of people in other nations just to survive? Probably not.



So now, as we dig ourselves out of the blizzard of 2016, we look forward to the season of Lent. A season when we not only think about how much we need neighbors, but how much we need God. I hope you will join us on our Lenten Journey.

See you in Church
Tom

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for February

February 7, 2016

- *Transfiguration Sunday*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Installation of Church Officers*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99;
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-43
Using the Moment

February 10, 2016

- *Ash Wednesday* **7:30 p.m.**
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Service of Ashes*
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17;
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Living in the Middle

February 14, 2016

- *First Sunday in Lent*
Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16;
Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13
The Spirit Led Him Where?

*Child Care is provided in the Nursery.
Children join their families in church and then leave for
Christian Education classes after the Children's Talk.*

*Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings,
followed by Fellowship Hour in Pollard Hall.*



February 21, 2016

- *Second Sunday in Lent*
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27;
Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35
When Trusting Seems Insane

February 28, 2016

- *Third Sunday in Lent*
Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8;
1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9
Dealing With Life's Tough Questions

**Scriptures that are listed after the first Gospel
reading are non-lectionary passages
that will be used in the sermon.
All the scriptures are provided here for
any weekly Bible reading you may do.**

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings
are posted on the church website.
Visit: www.fpcstirling.org, click on:
"Sermon Archive," then select the sermon
and/or scripture reading date you would like.



Pastor's Coffee Klatch

The next Coffee Klatch will be on **Saturday, February 6th, 9:00 a.m.**, at the Stirling House Diner. If you have a question, just want to talk, or have a friend you want to introduce to our church, plan to join Rev. Peters at the diner. Since he will not be doing any counseling, if you come and someone else is sitting with him, pull up a chair and join them.



2016 Church Offering Envelopes

There are still a few 2016 Church Offering Envelopes to be picked up in Pollard Hall.

Per Capita Apportionment

This year the Per Capita amount we are assessed **per member is \$34**. This money enables the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its Councils (Presbytery and Synod) to do their work. Please help out by paying the \$34 for everyone in your family who is a member of the church. The Per Capita envelope can be found in the front of your offering envelopes box. Thank you.

Joint Movie Night

On Friday, February 5th at 6:15 p.m. there will be a Movie Night in the meeting room of our church with our friends from Meyersville joining us. In honor of the success of the new *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, we decided to go back to the beginning and show the very first *Star Wars* movie Episode 4, which came out in 1977. We will begin with a supper of sandwiches and soup and then watch the movie. We ask that you make a donation for the sandwiches and soup and bring a dessert if you want to. During the supper, we will have a brief discussion of the idea of the great mythological quest. Plan to join us!

Christian Education Committee

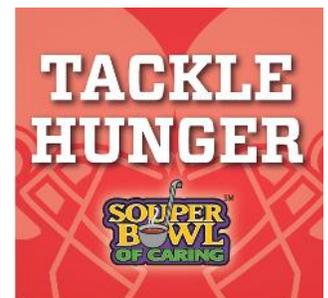
- Lore Pateman

Souper Bowl of Caring Collection, Sunday, February 7th

- Tom Parziale

In 1990 in South Carolina, a simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" inspired a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world. Once again, our church youth will be participating in this program, which helps us work towards fulfilling our Church's mission, **Feeding Those Who Hunger**.

The money they collect will be donated locally as decided by the youth. In recent years, donations have been given to the Market Street Mission in Morristown and the Community Foodbank of New Jersey in Hillside.



The youth of our church take this responsibility seriously. **They will be collecting your donations on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 7th**, as you exit the sanctuary following morning worship; please consider supporting this worthy cause. You can learn more about Souper Bowl of Caring at: <http://www.souperbowl.org/resources>.

Adult Bible Study

- Rev. Peters

We began our study of the **Gospel of John** on Thursday, January 28th. We are using the book *John*, by Gail R. O'Day and Susan E. Hylan, from the *Westminster Bible Companion* series. The class meets from **10:30 am to Noon every Thursday in the meeting room**. We have coffee and sometimes some delicious things to eat. **We invite you to join us** as we learn and share in fellowship, even if you have not been with us from the beginning or don't have the book.

Joint-Church Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series

The EIGHTH YEAR of our **Joint-Church Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series** has been planned!

This year's study is: ***The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Final Days in Jerusalem.*** We will be using a book of the same title by Marcus Borg and John Dominick Crossan, which looks at the last week in Jesus' life, using the Gospel of Mark. *(Participants do not have to purchase the book, but feel free to do so if you'd like to get into the topic in more depth.)*

We will meet for four Sundays, from 5-7 p.m., rotating churches and leaders. Each host church will provide a soup supper (soup, bread, beverage, and dessert) and child care.

Feb. 21	Host: Meyersville	Leader: Rev. Tom Peters
Feb. 28	Host: FPC Stirling	Leader: Heather Harris-Galgoci
March 6	Host: FPC Stirling	Leader: Rev. Barbara Aspinall
March 13	Host: Trinity United Church	Leader: Rev. Tom Peters

We share in a soup supper at 5:00 p.m., followed by our study, and we end by 7:00 p.m. All are invited to come, and feel free to bring friends.

**Be sure to come to the first session -
There will be a DRAWING for a copy of the book being used for the series!
There will be FOUR winners - so your odds are pretty good!**

Fourth Sunday Focus, February 28th

- Tom Parziale

Fourth Sundays give us an opportunity to connect with other members of our church family in a relaxed atmosphere: a pot of tea, a Box o'Joe, Munchkins . . . and conversation.



Our next "Fourth Sunday Focus" gathering will be on **February 28th** in Pollard Hall. We start around **8:45 a.m.** and end by about 9:45 a.m., but join us whenever you can. In December, our topic was *Accomplishments*. **If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.**

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

<u>Liturgists for February:</u>	Feb. 7	Israel Sierra, Jr.	Feb. 21	Jan Somers
	Feb. 14	Evelyn Smith	Feb. 28	Sue Gerech

Non-Perishable Food Collection, February 7th

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect donations of non-perishable food during the worship service. While we are receiving the Lord's Supper, we also want to provide for others. The food is donated to the township food pantry at St. Vincent Church. We continue to collect non-perishable food in the baskets located in the church entry-ways during the rest of the month.



***Following is a list of items most needed at the food pantry:**

Spaghetti Sauce (large jar)

White Rice: 2 or 5 pound bags

Macaroni and Cheese

Canned vegetables:

corn, carrots, beets, mixed veggies, yams

Breakfast food: Pancake mix, jelly, coffee, tea

Jello Gelatin

Canned Beans: Cannellini, Garbanzo

Dry Beans: Black, Kidney, Pinto

Spaghetti (long pasta only)



Ash Wednesday will be celebrated on **February 10th at 7:30 pm. in our church.**

We will be joined by our brothers and sisters from Meyersville for this service, which will include the Service of Ashes and the Sacrament of Communion. This will begin our Lenten journey, which concludes with the events of Holy Week.

Deacons Corner

- Katherine Ihringer

We would like to welcome our newest Deacon, Rene! We are so happy to have her. Speaking of Rene', if you have any pictures of church events, please send them to her. She is the person who puts together all of our wonderful scrapbooks.

Believe it or not, Ash Wednesday is coming up on **Wednesday, February 10th**. We hope you will join us as we start Lent. This also means that Easter is not too far away. If you would like to order Easter flowers, please talk to Israel Sierra.

On **Friday, February 5th**, we are having a movie night at our church with Meyersville. First, there will be a potluck dinner at 6:15. Feel free to bring any foods, drinks, or desserts. After dinner, we will be watching the very first Stars Wars movie in honor of how successful the most current one is. Please join us during this very fun event!

Deacons' Fund

Please remember to use the green *Deacons' Fund* envelopes for donations to help the Deacons with their Mission work. These envelopes are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate. Thank you!

Worship/Fellowship Hour Help

We need people to sign up to usher and host Fellowship Hour in the upcoming weeks. Remember that Fellowship Hour does not have to be fancy. All you need is coffee, tea, juice, and cookies. If you would like to donate towards it and have someone else host, speak to one of the Deacons.

Church Flowers

Please sign up on the Flower Chart in Pollard Hall if you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to: Flowers on the Ridge) should be given to Israel Sierra.



When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. *in memory, honor, given by*, and print clearly. Thank you.

Mission ProgramsFamily Promise of Morris County

- Phyllis Clemson & Jan Somers

Thank you to everyone who helped out on January 5th, when we hosted Family Promise at Trinity House in Stirling. This marks the beginning of our church's 27th year of participation in this program. We served a chicken dinner to our guests, 7 adults and 7 children. Thank you to those who donated food or money, and those who hosted and stayed overnight!

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator

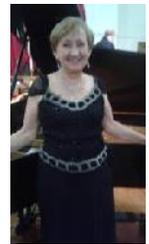


Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, February 12th, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We are in need of small cartons of juice; snacks of cookies, nuts, Goldfish, pretzels, etc.; and, plastic spoons. Cash donations are always appreciated and help with the purchase of bread and lunch meat. You can drop items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings, or give cash donations to Madeline or Jean. Thank you for your continued support of this very important and much appreciated program!

Upcoming Dates: March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10

Music Series

On Sunday, January 17th at 4 p.m., church members and friends enjoyed a wonderful piano concert presented by our organist, Tatiana. It was snowy and cold outside, but the atmosphere in the Meyersville church was warm and cozy as those who came out were treated to a wonderful concert of popular classical pieces, as well as some unfamiliar selections. For one piece, Tatiana was accompanied by Roberta Keller from Meyersville on organ. The concert was followed by a nice reception given by members of the Meyersville church.



On **Sunday, February 21st at 2 p.m.**, we will have the third of our concerts for this program year. This performance will be by the **Pasquale Grasso Jazz Quartet**. Pasquale is an acclaimed jazz guitarist who won the Wes Montgomery International Jazz Guitar competition in 2015. He has played in 20 different countries with the U.S. Embassy and performs weekly in the top jazz clubs of NYC. You can google "Pasquale Grasso" and find videos of his playing solo and in groups. We hope you will spread the news about this concert and invite people to attend.

Our next concert will be on **Sunday, March 13th**; artist(s) to be announced.

Congratulations!

In December, former member, Celeste Crawford, earned her doctorate in Rehabilitation Counseling from East Carolina University in Greenville, NC. Celeste will be working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions and Rehabilitation Counseling at ECU. Congratulations to Celeste and her proud family: parents, Joyce and Ken, and sister, Dawn (Sawyer).



Church Archives

Please remember to forward news clippings, bulletins, programs, or other memorabilia regarding any member of our church family to Rene' Phelan so she can keep our church archives up-to-date. There is a mailbox outside the church offices for this purpose. Thank you.

Water Available During Worship

There is a pitcher of water and cups available in the Church narthex in case you need a drink during worship. Please feel free to help yourself or signal an Usher to bring it to you.

Church Website

Our Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, is your source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more. Please make it a point to log on regularly and keep up-to-date with what's happening.

These Days

"These Days has been the concrete expression of the church's witness to the love of Jesus Christ to the world for more than three decades."

Our Church has a subscription for multiple copies of this devotional booklet; they are available in the Church narthex.

Labels/Box Tops for Education; Pop-Top Can Tabs

- Jan Somers

Please continue to save Labels for Education, Box Tops for Education, and pop-top can tabs. The labels are used by parent organizations in schools to earn educational and recreational items for students.



The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald MacDonald House to help fund their programs for hospitalized children and their families. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.

Free Gentle Yoga Class - Meyersville Presbyterian Church

Roseanne McGraw, a certified yoga teacher for 15 years, is teaching a free gentle yoga class in the Parlor at Meyersville Presbyterian Church on **Tuesdays from 9:00-10:00 a.m.** The class is on-going, so you can join at any time.



You will not be sitting or lying on the floor, so just bring yourself in comfortable clothes, and invite friends along. This class will be appropriate for all, the flexible as well as the tight. Injuries will be accommodated. Yoga is relaxing as well as good for general health; so, come give it a try.

Call or e-mail Rosanne with any questions or concerns: 908-508-1435, rosanne.mcgraw@gmail.com

Ongoing Mission Programs

Road to Bridges

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour supports Bridges Program, providing 40 lunches per month for NJ/NY homeless.

Township Food Pantry

Items can be left in baskets labeled "Food Pantry Donations" in the Church narthex and on the table outside of Pollard Hall.

Toiletries

Full-sized and "courtesy" sized bars of soap, shampoo, and conditioner, and shower caps are donated to various causes. Place on the pew inside Pollard Hall.

Sneaker Project

Place used pairs of sneakers (any size) on the pew inside Pollard Hall. They are sent to the Somerset Food Bank and other charities.

Eye-glasses, Sunglasses, Cell Phones

Place used glasses and cell phones on the pew inside Pollard Hall.

Yarn & Fabric

Yarn is used to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals; any color is acceptable. Fabric (with the exception of wool and stretchables) of about 1/2 yard is used to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc. Place on pew inside Pollard Hall.

Ongoing Fundraisers

ShopRite Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
 - ✓ Purchase cards at face value
 - ✓ Church earns 5%
 - ✓ Denominations available are:
ShopRite: \$20, \$50, \$100
- Gift Cards are available each week during Fellowship Hour or by contacting Jean Hoffman

iGive

- ✓ No cost to you
- ✓ Log on / sign up / find out more at:
<http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>
- ✓ E-mail this information to your friends

Please e-mail submissions for the **March** issue of *Stirling Stuff* to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **February 25th**. Thank you!

Why not invite a friend to church?

**GROUNDHOG
DAY**
February 2nd



Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling

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Our Mission

Jesus said, "Feed My Sheep." This welcoming and caring family, empowered by the love of Christ, shares the grace and peace of God's blessings by serving those who are hungry in body or spirit.